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ABSTRACT

The connection between liberal political philosophy and political education is discussed with particular emphasis on the philosophy of Thomas Hobbes. The purpose of the essay is to explain how liberal citizens become committed to a distinctively liberal conception of the common good. Part 1 discusses Hobbes' theory that rationally determining individuals' duties to society is analogous to the adding and subtracting of numbers. Quotations from "Leviathan" and critics' responses to that work are included. Part 2 traces political education and political theory according to the philosophies of Plato, Aristotle, Hegel, and Marx. This part sketches the general sense in which political education strives for the development of human character by creating an orientation toward the common good. Part 3 discusses political education and liberal political philosophy specifically. Liberal citizens are characterized as being bound together by a shared conception of society as an economic race in which potential winners and losers vie for a share of wealth under fair procedural rules. The works of John Locke and John Stuart Mill are analyzed. Part 4 examines the problem of individual character in a liberal political society with an emphasis on Hobbes' "masterless men" and "vain-glorious men." Part 5 returns to Hobbes and political education with a discussion of the theories in "Leviathan." Topics include men's "wild" and "tame" passions and the duty of political science to create good dispositions. (KC)

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HOBBES, LIBERALISM, AND POLITICAL EDUCATION

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Introduction

Most efforts to portray Hobbes as one of the founders of liberalism, despite his illiberal preference for absolute sovereignty, have focused on the substance of his views on human nature and social cooperation. The primacy of the individual right of self-preservation (Strauss), the notion of relative market value as the measure of human worth (Macpherson), and the devaluation of politics into a system of administrative rules (Wolin, 1960) are among the major substantive themes which commentators have argued link Hobbes to Locke and his progeny. These are powerful arguments and taken together they establish at least a *prima facie* case for including Hobbes in what we know as the liberal tradition. But they do not go far enough.

Arguments of this sort overlook a deeper continuity linking Hobbes to the liberal tradition at the point where theoretical method intersects the practical task of political education. I will argue that Hobbes's geometric method has had two related practical consequences. It has directly contributed to the transformation of "masterless" and "vain-glorious" men into petty, egocentric liberal citizens. Second, it has oriented them toward a new conception of the common good made up of divisible goods and formal rules for the fair distribution of those goods. In *De Cive* Hobbes's praise of geometry reaches its peak: "...whatsoever things they are in which this present age doth differ from the rude simpleness of antiquity, we must acknowledge to be a debt which we owe merely to geometry." And, Hobbes continues, if "moral philosophers" adopt this method, the passions which drive men into war "would presently faint and languish" (1972, p.91). The goal of this essay is to clarify the connection between the method of liberal political philosophy and political education, and then etch out the educative forces of Hobbes's method in particular. This will not only make Hobbes's

liberal status more secure; it will help explain how liberal citizens come by their view of themselves as a people committed to a distinctively liberal conception of the common good.

I. The Geometric Spirit

Among liberal political philosophers Hobbes, more than anyone, has recognized the role theory can play in the creation of a liberal self-image. Thanks to the careful historical research of Quentin Skinner, we now know who read Hobbes in his own day. But Hobbes's influence has not been limited to his radical contemporaries. Whis his actual readership as a percentage of the population may have fallen off since the seventeenth-century, Hobbes's primary images (the conflict-ridden state of nature, the elegance of moral and political geometry, and the metaphor of life as a competitive race) continue to shape the horizons of liberal citizens.

But Hobbes's contribution to liberalism goes beyond any laundry list of political terms. When liberals ask What political institutions provide them with what they need most and protect those things they feel naturally entitled to? They begin to acknowledge their debt to Hobbes's conception of political reason. This debt encompasses more than simply a formal decision procedure. Whether we think of this way of reasoning about politics as an argument from a hypothetical state of nature or the vantage point of an impartial observer, both contractarian and utilitarian procedures rest upon a deeper Hobbesean exercise in psycho-political reconstruction. That reconstructive geometric exercise enables us to recast our past along freshly drawn vectors that simultaneously point toward further liberty and a share in dominion. With this newfound continuity in our lives which promises a reconciliation of freedom and necessity (1962, p. 160), we begin to value

those "passions" which allow us to preserve this continuty by impelling us to run our lives like a race hedged in on both sides by formal rules (p. 256). In spirit, Hobbes is still with us.

> Continually to be out-gone, is misery.
> Continaully to out-go the next before, is felicity.
> And to foresake the course, is to die (1967, p.224).

The final Hobbesean question is not What is the logical thing to do to gain security and "felicity," given the rough equality in a conflict-ridden state of nature? The final question is Which of two competing sets of "passions," what Hirschman calls the "wild" and the "tame," do we want to be moved by? But this is only the final question. What precedes it, what prepares us for it, is even more important. It is the force of Hobbes's full geometric method, beginning with the crucial practice of naming, which prepares us to finally choose the "tame" passions and join the race.

According to most commentators, Hobbes assumed without argument that because security and "felicity" ("a continual progress of the desire, from one object to another; the attaining of the former, being still but the way to the latter" [1962, p. 80]) were desirable, rational people would choose Leviathan state when the only alternative was a state of war. The problem with this criticism is that it ignores how Hobbes's reconstructive geometric method prepares "masterless" and "vain-glorious" men for a rational appeal to their sub rosa interests in security and a life that gradually "advance(s) to delectation" (1972, p. 259). "Felicity" or the "continual progress of the desire" is possible in a race in which there can be only one winner because running itself affirms the new person we are in the process of becoming. It is because Leviathan state, trimmed down to Lockean size (p. 268), enables its citizens to build upon the self they have identified in name, that they feel committed to this state and the distinctive way of life it protects.

Far from having a pessimistic view of human nature, Hobbes's view is audacious: through the human powers of speech and method human beings can recreate themselves and Babel can be rebuilt.

Jurgen Habermas has argued that Hobbes is the "real founder of Liberalism" by virtue of his resolutive-compositive scientific method (p. 67). He claims that Hobbes's assumptions about the instrumental purpose of government, the legal protection of property, and formal equality under the law indicate a basic commitment to liberal ideals. But more fundamentally, argues Habermas, Hobbes's scientific method is anathema to genuine political practice, and this more than anything else is the legacy Hobbes has left to succeeding liberal political philosophers. Because Hobbes "abstracts away from the distinction between controlling and acting" (p. 76), his theory can never be adopted by "the mass of citizens" (p. 73). Hobbes does not address himself to people in terms of the world as they see it, but in terms of a world which he hopes to control through the "solitary and silent act" (p. 75) of technical manipulation. The original covenant, on the other hand, is a social act which people choose because it speaks to their needs as they see them and offers them a solution in a social language they share. According to Habermas, the covenant is anomalous in Hobbes's technocratic system. For all the lip service liberalism pays to individual liberty, at its core it is an authoritarian ideology whose meager legitimacy derives from the reputation of modern science.

Against Habermas, I will argue that Hobbes recognized the need to reach "the mass of citizens" and that his actual geometric method, not the resolutive-compositive scientific method he describes in the Author's Introduction to Leviathan, does enable his readers and their students to take a new critical stance toward the "wild" passions and adopt a conciliatory attitude toward private ambition and industry. Hobbes's geometric method reshapes the "artificer"

of political society as well as the "matter" (1962, p. 19).

Geometric reasoning is analogous to arithmetic, according to Hobbes. Instead of adding and subtracting numbers, "geometricians teach the same in lines, figures . . . and the like." Similarly, "writers of politics add together pactions to find men's duties . . . in what matter soever there is place for addition and subtraction, there is also a place for reason; and where these have no place, there reason has nothing at all to do" (1962, p. 41). And so, the "miserable condition of war" (p. 129) which impels us to consider life in Leviathan state is presented as an "inference made from the passions" (p. 100). The argument for the laws of nature which Hobbes recommends as "dictates of reason" (p. 124) that will lead us out of this "condition" is summarized as a "subtle deduction" (p. 112). As Thomas A. Spragens, Jr. has shown, it is this "geometric spirit" which has dominated liberal thought ever since (p. 31).

The idea that the geometric method of liberal political philosophy is responsible for the self-image of liberal citizens will strike many today as outrageous. The received wisdom sounds something like this. Unlike Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Machiavelli and Marx who believed that the closer they could position themselves to political power, the clearer their political vision would be, liberal political philosophers have strained to widen the distance between themselves and what they see as the compromising world of politics. If truth knows no compromise, then using a geometric method to discover the truth about politics requires some kind of institutional buffer against political contamination. Being an advisor to the prince is no better than being one of his lieutenants. According to Hobbes, Locke, Kant, Bentham, Mill and their present day counterparts, what is needed is some form of insulation from the political pressure to bend the truth in difficult

situations which does not preclude effective political influence. Universities, special commissions and advisory panels have performed this function of separating theory from practice in liberal society. Where these institutions have been effective, liberal political philosophers have been able to clarify the value choices individuals face in a political society dominated by the market and legitimate these institutions. The market and its supporting political institutions came first, not the method of liberal political philosophy.

If space permitted, I would argue that not only has the geometric method of liberal political philosophy been implicated in the rise of the liberal citizen's self-image, it has also legitimated the institutional distance between theory and practice which we now take for granted and which strips liberal citizens of their responsibility to think theoretically about their political lives. From the reform of the Poor Laws to today's innumerable "blue ribbon" commissions, liberal political philosophers, like their partners in social science, have been able to have it both ways. They share in the exercise of power while they enjoy the reputation of being above politics. However, unlike social scientists, liberal political philosophers can hardly minimize the effect of their political involvement by taking cover behind the banner of value-freedom. Unlike social scientists, they are openly committed to the liberal values of liberty and equality. This makes their privileged position even more astounding, and it means that our acceptance of it must be rooted in more than the pervasiveness of the fact-value distinction. It is a by-product of the reconstructive method itself. Hobbes's pre-occupation with getting Leviathan into the university was as much a function of his desire to capture this political position from the Scholastics as it was a desire to establish Leviathan's philosophic and scientific credentials. He needed this position because liberal citizens would depend upon philosophic expertise

for the ajudication of the rights-based interest conflicts which constitute their political lives.

One last point before launching into the body of the argument. The idea that liberal political philosophy has not outgrown Hobbes's reconstructive geometric method seems to ignore the sharp methodological disagreements today between utilitarian deductivists and contract theorists like John Rawls who consider themselves "Kantian constructivists." I suspect that when the smoke clears, these two methods will be much more compatible than some partisans now believe. There is some evidence that this is already happening (Scanlon; Sen). The real limit to Hobbes's influence is that his method focuses entirely on the immanent geometric continuity and coherence of the self within a single mathematicized world, and this is only half the story in liberal society. There is another side to the liberal citizen which is the product of Kant's moral casuistry, but this is the subject of another essay.

II. Political Education and Political Theory

In general, political education has two tasks: orientation and implementation. Citizens should be oriented toward a shared conception of the common good. That is, they should agree in a rough way about where they have come from as a people, what they hold in common, and where they hope to go (Wolin, 1978). Obviously, this is not always the case. Some people never do become citizens in this sense and the political society they belong to nevertheless survives. For it to survive as a political society, however, a certain critical mass of citizens must have this orientation toward a shared conception of the common good. Mere survival does not depend upon it, but political life does. Second, given this Aristotelian assumption about the difference between mere life and political life, citizens should learn how to

implement this vision of themselves as a people. How much, what, and when do they contribute to sustain the body politic? How do they obtain the benefits they are owed? How do they establish the limits of their obligations? Political education must also teach citizens how to find answers to these questions. To put their vision of the common good into practice, citizens need more than a set of received truths. They need skills, attitudes, and dispositions which enable them to translate a conception of what makes them a people into an everyday life stitched together by political responsibilities, legal safeguards and moments of political renewal.

Political education occurs within many overlapping spheres. The family, the workplace, religious institutions and political institutions proper are the most familiar arenas within which citizens come of age. My interest is in the role which traditional political theory and liberal political philosophy play in what we might call the intellectual sphere where teachers, writers, journalists, artists, critics, and their audiences engage in critical reflection and exchange. Political theory, both traditional and philosophical, has been one of the mainstays of this intellectual sphere, and it is related to political education in the following way. Theory itself may orient citizens toward a conception of the common good. It may retrieve a lost political past, unearth the hidden causes of a current crisis which is dividing the political community or evoke a new vision of community. In these cases I shall speak of theory <u>as</u> political education. In contrast, a theory <u>of</u> political education addresses the second task of implementation. Some theorists have taken on both of these tasks, and in fact some texts can be interpreted as orienting forms of political education as well as theories <u>of</u> political education. The distinction still stands.

Cutting across this distinction and binding the theoretical project

of political education together is the central importance of character development. The purpose of political education at both the orientation and implementation levels is to strengthen the character of citizens so that they will be able to see and then feel moved by their common life.

Understood as character development, political education has a grand heritage in the classical idea of paideia (Jaeger) and the Enlightenment idea of Bildung (Shklar). However, if political education is to be more than a process of socialization and accommodation, the teleological biases of these ideas have to be discarded. The following mad dash is an attempt to irreverently borrow what is useful from these two traditions stripped of their teleological biases.

Political education, Hegel argued, is "liberation and the struggle for a higher liberation still" (1967, p. 125). The struggle is one of distancing oneself from the "immediacy of desire" and the "caprice of inclination" by tracing the interconnected social origins of our unexamined needs and wants which serve as the so-called natural basis of the status quo. The alternative to the "immediacy of desire" is not the absence of desire but desire mediated by an understanding of which desires impede the "struggle" for justice and freedom and how they can be limited. The word "struggle" is carefully chosen. The arduousness of the process Hegel described was first intimated in the famous cave allegory of the Republic.

There Socrates argued that the aim of political education is "not to put power of sight into the soul's eye, which already has it, but to ensure that, instead of looking in the wrong direction, it is turned the way it ought to be" (518a). However, when confronted with the truth about their self-destructive desires, the cave dwellers lashed out at the would-be philosopher-king. People are not simply recalcitrant about examining their needs and

wants. They quickly become hostile when the origins of their felt needs are cast in a bright light. Suppressing this feeling of hostility is indeed a long struggle that few, if any, can do on their own.

Plato was the first to identify the problem of political education as one of character development and the transformation of deep-seated needs and less pressing wants. Aristotle broadened this project by emphasizing the limits which "particularity" created for a political order devoted to character development. Politics for Aristotle was preeminently concerned with the gradual nurturance of moral character (1179a20). However, he believed that because of the variety of circumstances which political action faces, virtue is more difficult to pin down and bring to maturity than Plato had suggested. The best Aristotle thought it was possible to do was to define the highest goal of character development, practical wisdom (phronesis), as the ability to make moderate, rational choices based on the example of "the man of practical wisdom" (phronimos) (1106b36) whose desires are presumably "correct" (1139a20). The weakness of this formulation, obviously, is that it defines phronesis partially in terms of what a phronimos would do without giving an independent account of "correct desire." Hegel's solution to this circularity in The Philosophy of Right was to define correct political desire on the basis of a teleological map of society. Neither Aristotle's essentialism nor Hegel's organicism is very satisfactory.

In a sense, Marx fashioned his view of political education from both Hegel and Aristotle. Because he believed that the struggle against the "immediacy of desire" is too much for the individual, Marx amended Hegel's conception of political education in a collectivist way. He accepted Hegel's claim that the self-formative process of character development was crucial to social and political transformation (1978, pp. 87-101) but disagreed that the

struggle was wholly a matter of self-reflection. According to Marx, only labor generates new needs and wants. Later in Capital he held that only concrete acts of self-conscious class struggle can correctly change our views of what we feel we must have to be whole. In his respect for the details of particular struggles, he was closer to Aristotle than to Hegel. However, "species-being," Marx's version of the unfinished Aristotelian notion of "correct desire," depends for its content on an unfinished philosophy of history much like Hegel's.

To join these views of political education together to form a useful concept, the character development which political education seeks must be linked to the tasks of orientation and implementation. Character development is linked to implementation in a fairly straightforward way. In order to effectively contribute to and benefit from a shared conception of the common good, citizens must have a minimum level of cognitive skills and an inclination to use them. These skills and inclinations are as much a part of their political character as the more general orientation they have toward the common good. They enable citizens to voluntarily pay taxes, obey laws, and serve in the military. They also enable them to bring lawsuits, collect benefits, dissent and vote. It has certainly been one of the major tasks of political theory to clarify these practices and persuasively argue for various interpretations of them. What is much more difficult to pin down is the link between character development, human needs, and an orientation toward the common good. From our brief review of paideia and Bildung, it is clear that theorists concerned with political education and character development have also sought to alter the relationship between needs and wants by re-interpreting their social origins. To do this, they have had to rely implicitly on a conception of the common good for the following reason.

Once a need is understood as a social product, theoretical political education has taught that its recognition and satisfaction become, at least in part, a matter of social priorities and political power, not individual choice or divine mandate alone. Priorities no longer set on the basis of what people once thought they naturally needed are determined on the basis of what they are committed to as a collectivity. The common good represents this new collective basis for determining the recognition and satisfaction of needs and wants, and political education has been above all responsible for persuasively articulating it. The common good redraws the boundary between deep-seated needs and mere wants.

It should go without saying that actual collective decisions which determine the recognition and satisfaction of needs and wants are rarely democratic even when in theory they are designed to be. The existing distribution of power along with traditional religious and moral beliefs will influence the final outcome. To make things more complicated, the articulation of a new collective identity is also never completely free from the old language of natural needs while new priorities begin to gradually assume a natural gloss of their own. Thus, the political recognition of new needs and the concomitant reduction of old needs to mere wants takes place within an ideological debate over what is natural with both sides claiming to be the protector of the natural order as they see it, and recommending different protective conventions for it (Appleby, 242ff.).

Now we have a sense of how the concept of the common good is linked to the theoretical reinterpretation of needs and wants, but there is one more important conceptual piece to this puzzle. It is the notion of an orientation. By an orientation toward the common good I mean a flexible stance toward what society considers its shared wealth which is informed by an understanding of the necessary instability of political order and the irreversibility of political

action. One way to expand this notion of an orientation is through the contrast between the classical virtue of phronesis and the modern virtue of prudence.

As we have seen, Aristotle's account of phronesis is incomplete. It runs aground on the idea of a "correct desire." If the critique of human needs is to be at the center of political education as an orienting process for citizens, then the idea of a "correct desire" must be given a political meaning. Unlike the teleological definitions of "correct desire" in Aristotle, Hegel and Marx, the notion of an orientation toward the common good is drawn from the very instability and unpredictability of politics itself. On this view, to have a "correct" political desire is to understand the exigencies of political life and know how to re-interpret the boundary between wants and needs so that political order and a shared common life can be restored. This is what it would mean to have an orientation toward the common good.

It is this idea of an orientation toward the common good which can be found in Thucydides's portrayal of Pericles. According to Thucydides, Pericles exemplified phronesis in its highest form. His "moderate and conservative policy" was based on an ability to rightly gauge the power of his country," and he was able to fuse together the community around a common vision of who they were despite the private costs which his own policies imposed on them (II.65). In contrast, Thucydides suggests that Alcibiades, no less skilled in military and public affairs, drove Athens to "ruin" because his private conduct "gave offense to everyone, and caused them to commit affairs to other hands" (VI. 15). Alcibiades, unlike Pericles, was not able to lead the "multitude" in a way that preserved their collective identity despite his technical virtuousity.

The modern virtue of prudence has been understood much more narrowly than I have rendered phronesis, and by distinguishing the two it will be

possible to press the latter into sharper focus. Prudence is usually thought of as a form of risk averse means-ends rationality (Richards, p. 69). It is a virtue because it indicates a tendency to conform to principles of rational choice. Similarly, other virtues are worth having, according to modern moralists, because they indicate tendencies to conform to other favored principles. Generousity is required by the principle of beneficence, humility by the principle of mutual respect, and so on (Richards, p. 285). In contrast, phronesis is not derived from any specific principle. It is an interpretative stance required by the nature of political order itself.

The weakness of the modern approach and what leads me to try to resurrect the classical virtue of phronesis is that the modern concept of prudence ignores the question of "correct desire" and underestimates the problem of reconciling conflicting principles. Alcibiades was no less "prudent" than Pericles in the modern sense of the term. His downfall, or rather Athens', came from his inability to limit his private excesses, hold the people's trust, and preserve their sense of collective identity. He was prudent but lacked the interpretative stance of the phronimos whose ability to "preserve" (Aristotle, p. 153, translator's note) part of the political past as a source of collective strength is necessary in a political world. This was precisely the force of Pericles's funeral oration which reminded the Athenians of their democratic traditions in the face of defeat and despair. Secondly, the modern understanding of virtue fails to tell us what virtues are needed when principles of beneficence, fairness, and mutual respect conflict. This, too, is a recurrent problem in a political world and more than a set of balancing rules is needed to cope with this dilemma. What virtue, one might ask, is appropriate to a balancing rule? Some additional strength of character beyond the particular virtues of generousity, humility and justice is required but calling it balance is not enough.

III. Political Education and Liberal Political Philosophy

Having sketched the general sense in which political education strives for the development of human character by creating an orientation toward the common good which includes a critical analysis of the social origins of needs grounded in an awareness of the peculiar character of political order itself, let me now turn to the liberal case. Before we can examine how liberal political philosophy has performed the two tasks of political education in its own distinctive way, we must first identify what conception of the common good is distinctive of liberal democratic society. Luckily this is not too difficult. Liberal citizens have been bound together, most would agree, by a shared conception of society as an economic race in which potential winners and losers vie for a share of the wealth under fair procedural rules. As Isaac Krammick has said,

> What a revolution is in this metaphor! Life is no longer a hierarchical ladder or a chain of being. It is a race. And this race should be fair; each and every runner in it should have an equal opportunity to win (p. 180).

A commitment to this conception of the common good rests on the promise that each person will have a fair chance. What people hold in common is a divisible sum and a set of procedural rights which guarantee equal opportunity. Liberal citizens view themselves as rival claimants to a stock of goods, services, and opportunities and possessors of formal rights which make a peaceful ajudication of these claims possible.

Now, liberal theories of political education are designed to enable liberal citizens to realize their share of divisible goods, services, and opportunities and steel themselves against the vicissitudes of this often lonely race. Liberal political theory as political education re-orders the needs and wants of citizens so they believe the race has to be run, win or lose, and provides them with an orientation toward this conception of the common

good so that as the exact extent of political equality and economic freedom has to be altered in light of particular circumstances, they can adjust their expectations without a loss of faith. This is the flexible orientation which citizens of liberal society must have toward their conception of the common good. They have to be willing to make do with less, if need be.

The two seminal liberal theories of political education are John Locke's Some Thoughts Concerning Education and John Stuart Mill's Considerations on Representative Government. The Education is composed for the peerage and its spirit is stoical throughout. Avoid tight-fitting clothes, sugar, salt, and "sweet-meats" (1968, p. 123-31). More generally, children should learn how to stifle those desires and appetites which make them unfit to govern (p. 138).

> It seems plain to me, that the Principle of all Vertue and Excellency lies in a Power of denying ourselves the Satisfaction of our own Desires, where Reason does not authorize them. This Power is to be got and improved by Custom, made easy and familiar by an early Practice (p. 143).

And,

> [h]e that has not a Mastery over his inclinations, he that knows not how to resist the Importunity of present Pleasure or Pain, for the sake of what Reason tells him is fit to be done, wants the true Principle of Vertue and Industry; and is in Danger never to be good for anything (pp. 147-48).

Once this stoical attitude towards desire has been implanted, Locke recommends that the next generation's ruling class study "Tully's Offices as Principles and Percepts of Vertue, for the Conduct of . . . Life" best suited to governing. This is to be followed by Cicero, Pufendorf, Grotius and the study of the common law (pp. 294-95).

Conspicuous in its absence is his own Two Treatises of Government which had been anonymously published three years earlier in 1690. This striking

omission is partially corrected in a letter to Roger Clavel in 1703. However, in this letter Locke divides the study of politics to suggest that his own work, which he groups with Tully, Pufendorf, Hooker and Sydney this time, is not directly connected to the "art of governing men in society" (1968, p. 400). These writers and the still anonymous author of the Two Treatises are only concerned with the "original of societies and the rise and extent of political power" -- necessary perhaps, but not sufficient knowledge for ruling. To learn the "art of governing, one must turn to experience and history, especially that of a man's own country" (p. 401). Here Locke recommends Tyrell, Bracton, and Ralegh as well as several narrower works on legal history and geography.

For Mill "experience and history" of this sort were not enough in light of the heightening class conflict in the middle of the nineteenth-century. The process of self-denial would have to be extended through adulthood and aided by what today we call role models. Actual experience in local government, within voluntary associations, and through close attention to informed debates in the partisan press was needed if the electorate in a liberal democratic society were to become competent to govern themselves. Locke's theory of political education had been tailored to the needs of a ruling class whom Locke believed could render impartial decisions if (1) they understood the distinctive dangers of judging in one's own case (1965, p. 396), and (2) they divided their political power among several branches of government (409ff.). Locke had not been overly concerned with what Mill understood to be the tension between the need for administrative competence in mass society and the self-protective importance of democracy. For Locke protection against the abuse of governmental power could be achieved through institutional arrangements and the stoic good sense of the peerage. Mill simply did not share Locke's

faith in impartial ajudication within a separation of powers when conflicting distributive claims arose, and frankly he was much more of a democrat than Locke. Like his father, Mill had no time for the doctrine of checks and balances. To reconcile the two goals of competence and self-government, Mill argued for limited but expanding political participation to educate citizens (1958, 127ff.). The study of political history was still important, but it had to be more systematic than Locke suggested (Cumming, Vol. 1, p. 75n4). More importantly, it had to be supplemented with a much wider set of opportunities for gaining political experience and exposure to exemplary leaders; otherwise, the self-denial of lower pleasures would be too difficult.

Despite these differences Mill, like Locke, did not view his own political theory as a necessary and prior program for orienting his readers toward a liberal conception of the common good. The right desires were already in place. The trick was to suppress the other more self-indulgent desires by either having people focus on the long run or the sterling conduct of an exemplary leader. Mill's own Autobiography represents just such an attempt to direct people's attention to the right role model (Cumming, Vol. 1, p. 40). Both Locke and Mill believed that society's economic wealth and individual political rights naturally constituted all that citizens held in common, and the task of political theory was in part to spell out what skills and attitudes would make it possibly to divvy up this common wealth. Mill was just more skeptical than his predecessor that it would be relatively easy to ensure that enough was always available to go around even if you could convince people to trim their appetites.

Liberal political theory as political education is a less familiar concept to us precisely because our most revered liberal political philosophers, Locke and Mill, were theorists of political education and did not conceive of

their own political philosophies as orienting forms of political education themselves. Their theories of political education uncritically presuppose liberalism's understanding of the common good. They explain how specific fields of study and activities prepare people to make fair claims on the stock of distributive goods, resources and opportunities liberal society has to offer and how to ajudicate between competing claims. They set out a plan for instilling the proper stoic attitudes in liberal citizens based on what they consider the need for long-range calculations and the recognition of "higher pleasures." But how do liberal citizens come to believe that this is what the common good should be and that they are at bottom rightful pursuers of pleasure? Locke and Mill tell us what liberal governments ought to do and how to make liberal citizens competent, but they do not tell us how to make citizens believe that their society as a whole should be a race for individual prizes overseen by politically neutral experts. To answer this prior question, we can now turn to Thomas Hobbes and the sense in which his theory was itself an orienting form of liberal political education.

VI. The Problem of Character

Hobbes is quite clear: the first problem facing political society is that some people are too proud to be ruled by others. They are "masterless men" who have a driving desire to hold dominion over others. Civil war is nothing but the "dissolute condition of masterless men," (1962, p. 141) and Leviathan state can rein in these "children of pride" (p. 236) by legally codifying the ninth law of nature (p. 200) which prohibits pride (p. 120).

The "masterless man" was a familiar historical as well as literary figure in Hobbes's day. Hobbes was not only writing in response to his own civil war. In the Netherlands, Scotland, Germany, Switzerland, France and Italy

disorder had been no less severe over the past 150 years, and Hobbes believed that this was the result of a passionate drive for personal power over others. Luther, the Machiavellian prince and Cromwell were just the most famous of this breed. At the heart of every "masterless man" from the displaced peasants who had lost their land through enclosure to Cromwell himself was the proud belief that by nature he was his own man. "Here I stand, I can do no other."

The most eloquent description of this mentality is to be found in Shakespeare's Richard II. In power, but well aware of his enemies, Richard still holds fast to the belief that nature itself will protect him.

> This earth shall have a feeling, and these stones
> Prove armed soldiers, ere her native king
> Shall falter under foul rebellion's arms (III.ii).

At one point after his allies have deserted him, Richard seems to recognize his own "vain conceit" (III.ii). His natural defenses have failed him and for a brief moment he sees that his power is waning. However, this fleeting introspective moment passes, for when he is brought face to face with Henry his pride again gets the better of him.

> Swell'st thou, proud heart? I'll give thee scope to beat,
> Since foes have scope to beat both thee and me (III.iii).

It is the fate of "masterless men" to be ruled by their own "vain conceit," take comfort in the false belief that nature supports them and eventually have their "glory, like a shooting star/Fall to the base earth from the firmament" (II.iv).

The proud pursuit of political glory, as Machiavelli knew, depends upon the manipulation of appearance and thus the perceptions of others. The Machiavellian prince lived in the realm of sheer appearance and "effectual truth." His glory came from his triumphs over others. Hobbes reinterprets glory in a psychological way in order to gain more purchase on it (Cumming, Vol. 2, pp. 45-48). Glory, for Hobbes:

> . . . hath as its cause, that the spirits, because they feel that the things they say and do are approved, rise from the heart to the face as witness of the good opinion conceived of themselves (1972, p. 52).

Glory is the "exultation of the mind" (1962, p. 52). In Hobbes's hands, the act of triumph is overshadowed by the feeling of "precedence."

But psychologizing glory is only the first step in expunging it. Two additional steps remain. The desire for "precedence" must be directed toward material goods. Then, petty egocentrism must supplant the vain, other-directed pursuit of wealth. The pleasure citizens of Leviathan state must settle for comes from the relatively non-comparing pursuit of "commodious living." Leviathan state depends on the character of its citizens, not the actions of glory-seeking rulers. Reckless "endeavor," which bring citizens into collision with one another have to be minimized. Their "felicity" must be material and as circumscribed as possible. Collisions can not be avoided completely, but the level of impact and frequency can be reduced.

This is why in Hobbes's lexicon "vain-glory" is clearly distinguished from the favored personality of the petty egocentrist. The petty egocentric pursuit of "felicity" is, as I have said, a less other-directed state of mind. It is only "the next before" whom we must "out-go." "Vain-glory," in contrast, is a form of madness that afflicts people who literally lose sight of themselves in the pursuit of a reputation. Hobbes mentions the "one that preached in Cheapside from a cart here, instead of a pulpit, that he himself was Christ, which was spiritual pride or madness" to illustrate "vain-glory" (1967, p. 228). It is true that because they are unable to capture political power, the vain-glorious will settle for a life of "ease and sensual delight." However, Hobbes makes it clear that unlike the petty, industrious entrepreneur whose tunnel vision leaves him satisfied with the kind words of a few close friends (Pascal, p. 60) the vain-glorious man is not "fit" (1972, p. 110n) for the society of

others at all. "Vain-glory" leads to the same ungovernable mentality as glory. Vain-glorious men frustrated with politics take refuge in materialism. However, like their more successful political brothers, their desire for "precellence" makes it impossible for them to establish a society that is either "great or lasting" (1972, p. 113).

V. Hobbes and Political Education

Hobbes begins and ends Leviathan by calling on the university to promote his "moral and civil science" (1962, p. 141). He denounces the "insignificant speech" of the "Schoolmen" but tells us this should not be taken as a "disproving" judgment against the university's "office in the commonwealth" (1962, p. 22). Leviathan is precisely the kind of "discourse" that "may be profitably printed, and more profitably taught in the Universities" (1972, p. 510).

What makes Leviathan so deserving of this official position is that it provides, on the most common reading of Hobbes, the "clear and exact method" necessary for ending civil war. Civil war arises when "men know not the causes of neither war nor peace" (quoted in Habermas, p. 72). Give them a method for tracing out the consequences of alternative hypothetical states of affairs, and they will learn how to avoid civil war. For Hobbes there is only one choice to be made, the choice between Leviathan state and civil war. Once people see this, they will choose the means necessary to secure peace in Leviathan state. That means, according to Hobbes, is the covenant through which the right of self-preservation is conditionally transferred to Leviathan state.

This rationalist solution to political conflict seems at best naive, and it proves to be an oversimplification of Hobbes's view. Sheldon S. Wolin has suggested that Hobbes actually had two separate "public teachings" (1970, p. 47). For the educated elite there was the version of the core argument of

Leviathan just sketched. For the "vulgar" Hobbes slaps together a "civil decalogue" which simplified the duties of citizens so that they could get on with the relatively peaceful business of procuring a "commodious living." Wolin claims that Hobbes absolves the majority of society from political responsibilities, and future elites have not hesitated to see in this a justification for their own self-serving behavior (p. 50). Hobbes may deserve some credit for this, but the Hobbesean road to an egocentric pre-occupation with "felicity," for both the "vulgar" and their teachers is more complex than Wolin suggests.

The need for something more complex is implied in the passage which introduces Hobbes's adaptation of the Ten Commandments. The sovereign has an obligation to teac citizens "the grounds or reasons of those his essential rights." These "grounds or reasons" must be "diligently, and truly taught" (1962, p. 248). Just as it is not enough to intimidate citizens into obeying, it is not enough, as Hobbes argues elsewhere, for citizens to merely parrot or memorize the rules of order if they are to "truly" understand them and be moved by them (1967, p. 204). They must understand these rules in the sense that they must know why they should not "dispute the Sovereign's power" (1962, p. 250). Pledging themselves to live by the rules without this level of understanding will not ensure obedience.

> [E]vidence is to truth, as sap to the tree, which, so far as it creepeth along with the body and branches, keepeth them alive; where it forsaketh them, they die; for this evidence, which is meaning with our words, is the life of truth (1967, p. 204).

Hobbesean political education, even for the "vulgar," is quite demanding even though political life itself will not be. Teaching people accustomed to lusting after political power or endlessly comparing themselves to others that their wellbeing depends upon giving up politics and "precellence" is no

simple matter. It may be just as difficult as teaching them to value political things in the first place, and so it is neither an exercise in logic nor rote memorization.

What is it about "truly" learning the "grounds and reasons" of sovereign authority which orients citizens toward a new conception of the common good and reshapes their character so that glory and vain-glory will be supplanted by the egocentrism of the petty entrepreneur? Liberal citizens-to-be are hardly expected to gather together to chant Leviathan in unison or study it in such a Talmudic way that its message is engraved in their hearts. To answer this question, we must return to Hobbes's geometric conception of a "clear and exact method."

As in geometry, basic terms must be clearly defined and initial premises must be non-controversial. In Leviathan the first step is actually one of naming, and the crucial names are those given to the passions. However, it is important not to exaggerate Hobbes's nominalism in this regard. Words may only be "wise men's counters," (1962, p. 37) but names signify "the nature of that we conceive" and this "be the same for all persons" (p. 40). The naming of the passions and self-examination must proceed hand in hand.

The problem, according to Hobbes, is that some people are likely to choose names that are colored by a prejudice or interest of their own. To avoid this, names, especially the names of the passions, must only signify "their nature" and not the "nature, disposition and interest of the speaker." This is what Hobbes means by the "apt imposing of names" (p. 45). The "true grounds of ratiocination" can never include words like justice, cruelty, gravity, and stupidity whose "signification" is "inconstant" in this sense (p.40).

Once the initial process of self-examination and naming has occurred so that only the nature of the human passions themselves is captured, the next

step is to plot the directions of persons moved by these passions. Hobbes begins with the smallest movements, "endeavors," and tracks them relentlessly not just as single particals but as vector sums which play themselves out in basically two ways. Some passions -- competition, diffidence and glory -- lead to recurrent conflict and disagreements; others tend to mitigate the problems of a life of continual movement and resistance. People remain "matter in motion," never fully satisfied with their lot, but something can be done to slow them down. Hobbes's readers become "fit for society not by nature but by education" (1972, p. 110n).

To be "fit" is to have the right "dispositions and manners" which in turn depend upon a variety of factors including bodily constitution, experience, self-image, luck, habit and most of all the teachings of those in authority. "Good dispositions are those suitable for entering civil society; and good manners (that is, moral virtues) are those whereby what was entered upon can be preserved" (1972, p. 70). It is the aim of Hobbes's "moral and civil science" to create "good dispositions" and preserve them. The causes of civil war, it turns out, are rooted in other facets of human character besides analytic abilities, and according to Hobbes character is neither monolithic nor immutable: ". . . appetites of particular things, proceed from experience, and trial of their effects upon themselves or other men" (1962, p. 48) and "the difference of passions proceedeth partly from the different constitution of the body, and partly from different education" (1962, p. 62). Hobbes's "clear and exact method" provides his readers with a means to influence which of their passions, the "wild" or the "tame", will be ascendant.

Competition, diffidence and glory (1962, p. 99) are the passions of colliding "masterless men" and those run ragged by their own vain-glory. These "wild" passions are juxtaposed against the passions that "incline

men to peace . . . fear of death; desire of such things as are necessary to commodious living; and a hope by their industry to attain them" (p. 102). The way to create an attachment to these passions of "industry," according to Hobbes, it through a careful geometric meditation which will distance us from the tyrannous grip of our more volatile appetites and aversions.

How? The answer involves the sense in which Hobbes thought "speech and method" were what distinguished human beings from other animals. Hobbes describes the original covenant as the blasphemous creation of a "mortal god" (1962, p. 132). But it is blasphemous not simply because of the scale of Leviathan state; the covenant concludes an even more audacious linguistic act of self-creation. The geometric argument of Leviathan begins with the human act of naming human passions, but it contains an important presupposition. According to Hobbes, rebellious men lost the names God gave them (p. 19) and were reduced to a "diversity of tongues" (p. 34). Neither their sheer numbers nor their social nature (p. 130-31) could save them from this. It is speech and method which enable them to reconstruct themselves as a body politic (p. 31). More specifically, it is the restoration of their consciousness of a peculiar linguistic power which enables them to reconstruct themselves as a body geometry. The question now is whether this is anything more than a boast on Hobbes's part. Are Hobbes's linguistically self-made men really more likely to favor their "tame" passions?

When Hobbes's readers check Hobbes's account of their passions against their own personal experience, as he urges them to (1962, p. 20), they find they are no longer haunted by doubts about their own ability to act freely in a previously mysterious world. They can look back upon their lives to see where they have gone wrong by their own volition and where they have been misled by "insignificant speech." They see a path leading back into

their past and extending into the future which cuts decisively through the political terrain of freedom and necessity; a path that had not been visible to them before. The self Hobbes has revealed to them no longer is torn between the opposing values of liberty and dominion. From the point of view of the Hobbesean self as "matter in motion" liberty and dominion are finally consistent (1962, p. 160; 1967, 245ff).

With the recognition of this new self through the proper use of "speech and method" comes a new ambition to further enhance and preserve this continuity and coherence which seems to reconcile freedom and necessity. "Wild" passions are less attractive for they lead to violent unpredictable collisions and ultimately neither liberty nor a share in dominion. Passions which lead to methodical, industrious behavior are more attractive. They enable the new self-made person to continue to build a protective grid within which freedom and necessity can continue to co-exist. The strength of character which Hobbes's readers draw on to choose to be moved by their "tame" passions comes from reconstructing their own past actions and extending these one step further through the original covenant. The covenant promises continued freedom (i.e., "the absence of external impediments" [p. 103]) to a self in "perpetual motion" (1972, p. 54) content to move where the laws are silent (p. 65). Having found out who they really are, Hobbesean citizens are unwilling to give it up for something so ephemeral as glory or "precellence." It makes much more sense to run carefully along the path marked by the symbols of their own methodical industry, testaments to the coherence of the new man who is both "matter" and "artificer" of Leviathan state. The new liberal man is not just his own master; he is his own maker and so it should come as no surprise that he has grown attached to his product. This is the basis for his willingness to run a race which he has no assurance of winning.

VI. The Other Strand

Hobbes's political theory is the first and most influential instance of liberal political philosophy as political education. His geometric method enalbes liberal citizens to redraw the boundary between needs and wants as the competitive race of life tightens up. The liberal psychology of self-denial and emulation which Locke and Mill recommend depend upon the flexibility and egocentrism created by Hobbes's reconstructive geometry.

The major modification in the liberal conception of theory as a a form of political education after Hobbes has occurred through the work of Immanuel Kant. Kant's casuistic method also enable his readers to reconstruct their autobiographies, but it does it by giving them a method for inserting a new moral foundation into their lives. Kant's method of moral casuistry has us test action hypothetically against the categorical imperative. In this way it reveals the moral integrity of the self -- as opposed to its linear continuity and additive properties. The desire to preserve and extend this new moral self then becomes the motivational basis for a hypothetical agreement to obey a government based upon principles which reach more deeply into civil society than Hobbes's laws of nature. These Kantian principles of justice do not legislate morality, but according to Kant, they do establish the environment within which this new moral character can develop. Thus, our attachment to these principles presupposes an attachment to a casuistically constructed self-image. Like Hobbes, Kant believes he has reconciled freedom and necessity, but his solution is to separate moral personality from scientific causality, not collapse the two. Where Hobbes promises his readers geometric rigor and the power of creation, Kant promises them dominion in a Kingdom of Ends.

All this, of course, remains to be seen. Some might argue that the

Kantian strand in liberal political philosophy has humanized what would otherwise be a cold, a-moral process of political education. This is probably true, but it is incomplete as an evaluation. The consequence of the Kantian "turn" in liberalism, I would argue, is to leave liberal citizens with the worst of both worlds. They are obtuse about the nature of political power and content to restrict morality to questions of individual choice. Rather than humanizing the liberal self-image, Kantian political education has weakened it politically just where it was strong. Hobbesean egocentrists may have lost their taste for politics, but they have not forgotten that politics is first and foremost concerned with power.

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